

4. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in Claim 3, where gum arabic and gellan gum are present in a ratio from 5:1 to 15:1.

5. Sugar-free gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 4, where the noncrystalline sweetener phase of the soft caramel base mass is formed of maltitol syrup, polydextrose and/or hydrogenated starch hydrolysate.

6. Sugar-containing gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 4, where the noncrystalline sweetener phase of the soft caramel base mass is formed of glucose syrup and/or starch hydrolyzate.

7. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 6, where the soft caramel base mass additionally contains one or more intensive sweeteners.

8. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in Claim 7, where the intensive sweetener is cyclamate, saccharine, aspartame, glycyrrhizin, neohesperidine dihydrochalcone, thaumatin, monellin, acesulfame, alitame or sucralose.

9. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 8, where the soft caramel base mass contains 2 to 15% fat.

10. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 9, where the soft caramel base mass contains at least one emulsifier.

11. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 10, where the soft caramel base mass contains 0 to 5% of at least one protein component, in particular milk protein.

12. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 11, where the soft caramel base mass contains one or more natural or synthetic food dyes.

13. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in Claim 12, where the food dye is chlorophyll, a chlorophyllin, carmine red, alura red,  $\beta$ -carotene, a riboflavin, an anthocyan, betanine, erythrosine, indigo carmine, tartrazine or titanium dioxide.

14. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 13, where the soft caramel base mass contains flavorings and flavoring agents.

15. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in Claim 14, where the flavorings and flavoring agents are essential oils, synthetic flavorings, fruit essences, eucalyptus, peppermint oil, menthol and acids.

16. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 15, where the water content of the soft caramel base mass is 5 to 14% water.

17. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in Claim 16, where the water content of the soft caramel base mass is 6 to 12% water.

18. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 17, where the soft caramel base mass additionally contains at least one medicinal active agent, for example dextromethorphan,

hexylresorcinol/menthol, phenylpropanolamine, dyclonine, menthol eucalyptus, benzocaine or cetylpyridinium.

19. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 18, where the soft caramel is filled or unfilled.

20. Gelatin-free soft caramels as in one of Claims 1 to 19, where the soft caramel is coated or not coated.

21. A method for producing a gelatin-free isomaltulose containing soft caramel that consists of

a) preparation of a noncrystalline sweetener phase by dissolving at least one soluble sweetener in water,

b) addition of at least one polysaccharide hydrocolloid, at least one fat component, at least one emulsifier and a part of the total amount of the isomaltulose that forms the crystalline sweetener phase to the noncrystalline sweetener phase,

c) heating the mixture obtained in (b) to a temperature of at least 100°C by feed of steam,

d) addition of the remaining isomaltulose to the heated mixture while stirring,

e) incorporation of air into the mixture obtained in (d) and

f) cooling the mixture.

22. A method as in Claim 21, where 70% to 90% of the total amount of isomaltulose is added to the noncrystalline sweetener phase and then heated together with it.

23. A method as in Claim 22, where 74% to 85% of the total amount of isomaltulose is added to the noncrystalline sweetener phase and then heated together with it.

24. A method as in one of Claims 21 to 23, where the mixture containing the noncrystalline sweetener phase is heated to 110°C.

25. A method as in one of Claims 21 to 24, where after heating the mixture containing the noncrystalline sweetener phase the feed of steam is stopped and the mixture is subjected to a vacuum.

26. A method as in Claim 25, where after the end of the feed of steam the temperature of the mixture rises to 125°C to 130°C.

27. A method as in one of Claims 21 to 26, where after adding the remaining isomaltulose the air is introduced into the mixture by whipping the heated mixture.

28. A method as in one of Claims 21 to 26, where after adding the remaining isomaltulose the heated mixture is cooled and air is introduced into the mixture by pulling the cooled mixture.

29. A method as in one of Claims 21 to 28, where the air containing mixture after cooling is pulled to a strand and the strand is cut into pieces.